

Providing Institution:



CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH  
Language Assessment  
Part of the University of Cambridge

You are going to read a newspaper article about a man who drives a special truck. Seven sentences have been removed from the article. Choose from the sentences **A – H** the one which fits each gap (**1 – 7**). There is one extra sentence which you do not need to use.

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

## The longest truck in the world

*In the outback of Australia, Jeremy Hart hitched a ride on the Centipede.*

'If I take my foot off the accelerator, it'll take us about four kilometres to stop,' says Matt Langley, the Australian captain of the *Centipede*, which, at approximately 54.5 metres, and consisting of a driver's cab and six trailers, is claimed to be the world's longest truck. Matt has a delicate touch. His hands, on the 60 cm steering wheel, control a million dollars' worth of trailers carrying zinc ore.

One false move on the narrow 128-km road from McArthur River Mine, the world's largest zinc mine, to the port at Bing Bong and the *Centipede*, with its 110 wheels, would crash. However, in two years of delivering valuable loads of powdered zinc ore from mine to coast, the truck has had only one accident. **1**

I asked him about the job. 'The hardest thing is the concentration. The road is really boring and in places it is a bit rough. One problem is the fact that you are pulling six huge trailers behind you. **2** I'd hate that to happen to me.'

Almost 60 metres ahead of the last trailer, high above the road in the air-conditioned comfort of Matt's cab, you can lose almost all sense of pulling 130 tonnes of raw material. **3** This movement is repeated down the length of the *Centipede*. Matt is in control but you can see it takes a real effort.

In this most remote northern corner of Australia, traffic is not a problem for Matt and

his co-driver, Mick Webster. 'Some days we don't see another vehicle on the run to Bing Bong, but when we do, we try to be as courteous as possible,' says Matt. **4** In any case, some are too scared to try. Others think this is just a normal-sized vehicle with two or three trailers attached. When they see it's six, they either back off or go by us with their mouths wide open.'

The truck is breaking new ground in technology. The Northern Territory government had to change the regulations to legalise the *Centipede* for road use. **5** They're sealed with covers to prevent ore dust from polluting the environment, and they have a special loading and off-loading device.'

It took just under two hours, in a temperature of 40 degrees, to crawl at no more than 64 kph from McArthur Mine to Bing Bong. **6**

On arrival at his destination Matt punched a button to unload the zinc onto the floor of the huge cyclone-proof warehouse where it is kept before being shipped to Europe and Asia. It didn't look like much. 'When you see how small a full load looks when it's unloaded onto the floor of the warehouse, it's very frustrating,' he says. **7** 'I asked him how he enjoyed the job. 'I wouldn't do anything else, mate,' was his reply.

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| <b>A</b> | The great thing they've done with this truck is to redesign the trailers carrying the ore at the back.   | <b>E</b> | I sometimes stop for a rest along the way and then get going again.                    |
| <b>B</b> | Then, as it hits a rough patch of road, the Canadian-built truck bounces up and down like a Wild West rodeo star.  | <b>F</b> | Though we risk turning over if we move over too far to let them pass.                  |
| <b>C</b> | So you can see why we don't use smaller trailers for the job.  | <b>G</b> | Once, one of the drivers lost control just for a moment, and two of them turned over.  |
| <b>D</b> | 'That's not bad, considering this truck does about 320,000 km a year between the mine and the port, running about five return trips a day,' says Matt as we pull out of McArthur Mine. | <b>H</b> | 'You can imagine, at that speed, I've come to know every bit of this road,' says Matt. |

**Answer key:** 1-D, 2-G, 3-B, 4-F, 5-A, 6-H, 7-C